

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A data communications network includes a ring configured for spatial reuse, such as a resilient packet ring. A first bridge is coupled to the ring and to an end station such as an interworking  
5 bridge or router. A second bridge coupled to the ring learns an association between the first bridge and the end station by monitoring packets originated in the network by the end station and sent on the ring by the first bridge. The second bridge learns the association by obtaining an identifier of the first bridge and  
10 an address of the end station from received packets. When the second bridge receives packets destined for the end station, the packets are forwarded as broadcast transmissions on the ring if the association between the first bridge and the end station has not yet been learned, and are forwarded as unicast transmissions  
15 to the first bridge on the ring if the association between the first bridge and the end station has been learned.

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